



Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee

The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.

October 17, 2013

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

RI Parent Information Network
1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

Meeting Minutes

Present: Edward Angilly, Kate Barnas, Wilfred Beaudoin, Sharon Bissonette, Eileen Botelho, Cris Brodeur, Amy Canario, Jennifer Connolly, Lori Di Pina, Susan Donovan, Cindy Duckworth, Allyson Dupont, Joanne Eichinger, Gillian Elliott-Pearis, Deborah Garneau, Rosemary Gomes, Patti Hien, Barbara Irons, Joann Nanning, Cynthia Notarinni, Pamela O'Brien, Robin Pacheco, Mary Pendergast, Brian Quigg, Elizabeth Santana, Maria Silvestri-Golotto & Robert Wall

Absent: *Laura Laviano, *Craig Lewis, *Doug Pierson, Ann Brockmann*, & *Sharon Ursini-Quimby

** Notes that prior notice was given regarding absence*

RIDE/RITAP Attendees: Beth Pinto & David Sienko

Call to Order, Welcome, and Agenda Review: The meeting was called to order at: 6:35 by the Chair and new members were introduced.

Old Business: Approval of minutes

The June Meeting Minutes were reviewed by the membership a Motion to accept the Minutes with amendments was made by Robert Wall & seconded by Mary Pendergast. Motion approved by the membership. Vice Chair presented a summary of the Strategic Planning Retreat.

Director's Report

David Sienko reviewed:

1. RIDE survey on Common Core and special education

RIDE developed a survey entitled *Common Core and PARCC for Students with Disabilities* to determine the readiness of special education personnel to implement Common Core State Standards and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) assessments for students with disabilities. The twenty-question survey was taken by special education personnel, including administrators, special education teachers, and related service

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personnel. Results will be analyzed to determine how to support special education personnel during the transition to Common Core.

2. RIDE provides Diploma System technical assistance

The Office of Multiple Pathways is responding to several requests from schools and districts to review aspects of their diploma system by offering technical assistance. The office will reach out to districts to set up meetings with school teams.

3. RIDE releases report on first year of implementation of Educator Evaluation System

The full implementation of educator evaluations last year represented one of the most significant education initiatives ever launched at the state level in Rhode Island. Based on the belief that implementing fair, accurate, and meaningful educator evaluations will provide feedback to help improve teaching and learning. To read the report, visit website at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/TeachersAdministrators/EducatorEvaluation.aspx>

4. PARCC releases information on technology specifications, accommodations for the field test

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) has drafted a guidance document to assist schools in confirming their technology capacity for the field test in Spring 2014. Computer-based accessibility features and embedded accommodations are also listed, along with their expected availability dates. Some parts of the PARCC assessment delivery system are still in development, some functionality for the field test and some accessibility features and accommodations may not be available for the Spring 2014 Field Test but are in development for expected inclusion in the operational test. For the full list of device specifications and accommodations available during the PARCC Field Test, please see:

<http://www.parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/FullTechnologySpecificationsforPARCCFieldTestV1-September2013.pdf>

5. RIDE adds four tests to list of other approved assessments for meeting graduation requirements

The intent of the other RIDE-approved tests is to allow students the opportunity to provide evidence from an external, standardized assessment that they have met or exceeded the assessment expectation required to earn a high-school diploma. Four new standardized tests have been added to the other RIDE-approved test list, effective September 1. The full list of tests and accompanying cut scores can be found on the website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Diploma-System/RIDE-Approved-Tests-Revised2013.pdf>.

6. Upcoming Common Core outreach events for parents/community, and videos opportunity

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) received a grant from the GE Foundation to help parents and the community to understand what the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) mean for our students and our classrooms and how the CCSS prepares our students for college and for challenging careers. RIDE will be conducting outreach to help promote increased understanding of the CCSS throughout the state. RIDE is developing materials and CCSS videos as well as coordinating outreach events throughout the state. The Rhode Island Common Core Ambassadors team, a group of experienced local educators, will visit communities and offer their expertise as to how the CCSS will impact teachers and students in Rhode Island schools.

PCG Education will also be making short informational videos about RI's transition to the Common Core State Standards. The videos produced from these recording sessions will include examples of Common Core State Standards learning in classrooms as well as information to increase awareness and understanding of Common Core efforts that are currently underway in schools across Rhode Island. Once finalized, videos will be featured on the [RIDE website](#), the [Ready, Set, Go Common Core! Facebook page](#), and other online

environments. The videos will also be made available for free download/linking to businesses and community organizations (e.g., libraries) for use as a video loop on display screens.

7. RIDE develops “myths and facts” document about assessments and the Diploma System

As students across the state are now in the process of taking their NECAP tests as part of the system of statewide assessment, the conversation continues about the appropriate use of NECAP assessments as one element in our diploma system. To help students, families, and the public at large understand the truth about our use of assessments, to tackle misinformation head-on, to allay some public fears and concerns, and to provide students with confidence that they can earn a diploma, we have developed a short “myths and facts” document about the Diploma System. This has been shared with media outlets and will be on the Commissioner’s Corner page of the RIDE web site shortly.

8. New Alternate Assessment pilot test to be administered in April, May

Rhode Island is one of 25 states developing a new alternate assessment that will replace our current Rhode Island Alternate Assessment. The Rhode Island Alternate Assessment (RIAA) is the state assessment for the small number of students with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in large-scale assessments even with accommodations. The new assessment, the National Center and State Consortium (NCSC) alternate assessment, will be given in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11 in English language arts and mathematics in the spring of 2015.

In April and May of next year, the Phase 1 of the pilot testing will occur. This phase will test the accessibility and content of the items and the assessment delivery process. For more information on the NCSC alternate assessment, please go to www.ride.ri.gov/RIAA and click on the NCSC tab.

9. RIDE releases Early Warning System tool for helping at-risk students

The Rhode Island Early Warning System (EWS) is now available via RIDEmap. The RIDE EWS tool includes a set of indicators that enables educators and school teams, using current student data, to identify and intervene with students at risk of not graduating from high school on time. The EWS screens all students from grades 6 through 12.

10. RI Special Education Regulations Revised and Posted

The RI Special Education Regulations have been approved by the Board of Education and the changes to the regulations go into effect October 9, 2013. You may view the regulations at: <http://sos.ri.gov/documents/archives/regdocs/released/pdf/DESE/7377.pdf>. The most significant change is the new parental consent for accessing public funds, (e.g. Medicaid), authorized by IDEA 2006 34 CFR §300.154 (d). This change will allow LEAs to obtain a one-time written consent and provide written notification to the child’s parents before accessing the child’s or the parent’s public benefits or insurance for the first time and prior to obtaining the one-time parental consent and annually thereafter.

A workgroup comprised of staff from RIDE, RITAP, ARIASE, school district billing specialist and a parent consultant from RIPIN met several times to develop the following materials attached to this Update for your use:

1. Model Consent Form, effective: 10/9/13
2. Implementation Guidance, effective: 10/9/13

Announcements:

Deb Garneau presented an update on the early childhood learning standards focus groups. Deb reports that they are recommending that a home visit component be added to the program utilizing the child find assessment. Information will be available from each school district.

New Business:

RISEAC Annual Report is presented to the membership for their review
Robert Wall calls for acceptance of report as written
This is seconded by Amy Canario
Approved by the remaining membership

Mary Pendergast reviews the five workgroups RISEAC has selected to focus on this year. Mary reminds the Committee how important it is to have a balanced number of committee members on each workgroup.

The workgroups are:

Secondary Transition

This group will review the graduation requirements, PBGR's and the current transitioning planning within the State

Policy Advisory

This workgroup will focus on reaching out to legislators within our State to educate them on how the policies they are reviewing impact the children with special needs within our State. They will be tasked with drafting a letter which will be forwarded to said legislators to inform them of the RISEAC Mission Statement.

Social & Emotional Learning

Social Emotional Learning is a holistic approach to education which is being reviewed by RIDE.

This workgroup has been tasked with gathering data related to the impact that SEL has on student achievement by reviewing data from the CASEL program's test districts.

Ending Unnecessary Physical Restraint

This workgroup will continue to work with RIDE & DD. They intend to form a partnership with parents & educators. They are seeking electronic data collection at the State level as well as a review of how other States are gathering restraint data. They are seeking information on the distribution of the restraint brochure they developed to families.

Educational Initiatives

This workgroup will focus on the State's transition to Common Core Standards & PARCC, graduation requirements, Educator Quality (Evaluation System) and Alternate Assessment. They will gather information on the materials & teacher certifications which are required to educate students within this curriculum.

Chair reminds the membership that guest speakers will be announced for the 13-14 calendar at next meeting.

Public Comment: None**Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was initiated by Bob Wall & seconded by Deb Garneau

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25

Recording Secretary:
Kate Barnas, RN
RISEAC website: www.riseac.org